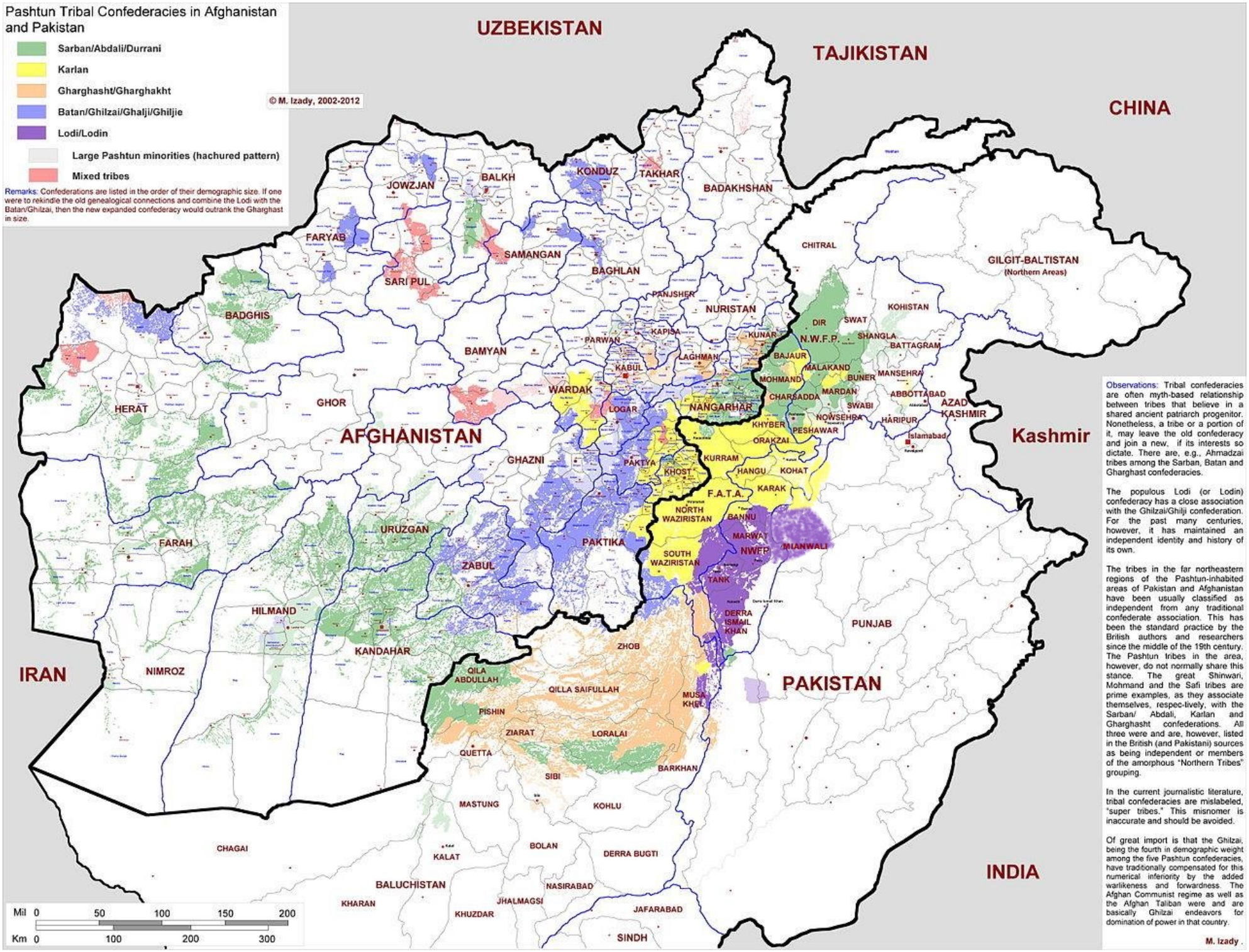

Observations: Tribal confederacies are often myth-based relationship between tribes that believe in a shared ancient patriarch progenitor. Nonetheless, a tribe or a portion of it, may leave the old confederacy and join a new, if its interests so dictate. There are, e.g., Ahmadzai tribes among the Sarban, Batan and Gharghast confederacies.

The populous Lodi (or Lodin) confederacy has a close association with the Ghilzai/Ghilji confederation. For the past many centuries, however, it has maintained an independent identity and history of its own.

The tribes in the far northeastern regions of the Pashtun-inhabited areas of Pakistan and Afghanistan have been usually classified as independent from any traditional confederate association. This has been the standard practice by the British authors and researchers since the middle of the 19th century. The Pashtun tribes in the area, however, do not normally share this stance. The great Shinwari, Mohmand and the Safi tribes are prime examples, as they associate themselves, respec-tively, with the Sarban/ Abdali, Karlan and Gharghasht confederations. All three were and are, however, listed in the British (and Pakistani) sources as being independent or members of the amorphous "Northern Tribes" grouping.

In the current journalistic literature, tribal confederacies are mislabeled, "super tribes." This misnomer is inaccurate and should be avoided.

Of great import is that the Ghilzai, being the fourth in demographic weight among the five Pashtun confederacies, have traditionally compensated for this numerical inferiority by the added warlikeness and forwardness. The Afghan Communist regime as well as the Afghan Taliban were and are basically Ghilzai endeavors for domination of power in that country.

M. Izady .